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Message Text

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72
ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4120
INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 5740

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BL
SUBJ: FALANGE THINKING ON CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: LA PAZ 5679

1. RELIABLE SOURCE IN TE FSB HAS PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION, WHICH PUTS INTO PERSPECTIVE CERTAIN RECENT DECLARATIONS OF FALANGE NATIONAL CHIEF MARIO GUTIERREZ. GUTIERREZ MADE HIS STATEMENTS IN DEFENSE OF DR PAZ ESTENSSORO AND CIRO HUMBOLDT AS THE LEGITIMATE CHIEF AND SUB-CHIEF OF THE MNR BECAUSE HE WAS CONCERNED OVER THE RECENT GOVERNMENT-IMPOSED CHANGES IN THAT PARTY'S LEADERSHIP, FROM PAZ TO HUMBOLDT, AND HUMBOLDT TO GUILLERMO FORTUN. GUTIERREZ BELIEVES THAT THE GOB WILL NOW MOVE TO REPLACE AN INCREASINGLY WEAK FORTUN WITH RAUL LEMA PELAEZ, AND THAT AT AN APPROPRIATE MOMENT IT MIGHT ALSO SEEK TO BRING ABOUT HIS OWN REPLACEMENT AS FSB CHIEF BY A MORE COMPLIANT FALANNGE LEADER. THUS, GUEIRREZ" DEFENSE OF PAZ WAS IN REALITY A DEFENSE OF HIS OWN LONG-TERM INTERESTS.

AS THE CHIEF OF A NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTY.

2. AT THE SAME TIME, GUTIERREZ IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE GROWING EVIDENCE THAT PRESIDENT BANZER IS FOMENTING THE GROWTH OF THE BARRIENTISTA FRB AS A COUNTER-WEIGHT TO THE MNR AND THE FSB. FEARING THA THE BANZER GOVERNMENT'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY MIGHT
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INCLUDE SUPPORTING THE REGIME'S MILITARY CANDIDATE FOR THE

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PRESIDENCY IN 1975 WITH CAMPESINO VOTES AND A SUBSERVIENT CIVILIAN FRONT (POSSIBLY AN ALLIANCE OF BARRIENTISTA PARTIES), GUTIERREZ HAD THE FALANGE PROPOSE HIS OWN NAME AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, AND THEN CAME OUT WITH A STATEMENT FAVORING THE CONCEPT OF A JOINT FSB-MNR ELECTORAL SLATE. IN THIS WAY, GUTIERREZ HOPED TO GIVE WARNING TO BANZER THAT THE ULTIMATE RESULT OF THE POSSIBLE GOB STRATEGY OUTLINED ABOVE MIGHT, AS A LAST RESORT, BE THE OPEN OPPOSITION OF THE COUNTRY'S TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES TO THE GOVERNMENT'S OFFICIAL CANDIDATE.

3. GUTIERREZ ALSO STATED THAT HE FAVORS A GENERAL POLITICAL AMNESTY, BEGINNING WITH INTERNAL AMNESTIES IN EACH POLITICAL PARTY, INCLUDING ONE IN THE FSB WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE DISSIDENT FALANGE LEADER CARLOS VALVERDE. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, THIS STATEMENT WAS DESIGNED TO PLACATE GUTIERREZ' BASE IN THE SANTA CRUZ AREA, WHERE VALVERDE IS ALSO VERY POPULAR. GIVEN THE PERSONAL UNPOPULARITY OF DR. PAZ ESTENSSORO IN SANTA CRUZ, GUTIERREZ COULD HARDLY SPEAK FAVORABLY OF PAZ WITHOUT ALSO SEEKING, BY WAY OF COMPENSATION, TO MAKE A GESTURE TOWARD ONE OF SANTA CRUZ' EXILED FAVORITE SONS. GUTIERREZ' ULTIMATE INTENTIONS TOWARD VALVERDE WOULD INCLUDE HIS RE-INTEGRATION INTO FALANAGE, AND SUBSEQUENT ASSIGNMENT TO A REMOTE DIPLOMATIC POST COMFORTABLY FAR FROM BOLIVIA.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY BELIEVES CHANCES OF MNR SUPPORTING AN FSB CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT ARE VIRTUALLY NIL. IT IS MUCH MORE LIKELY THAT PAZ WILL APPROACH THE ELECTIONS ON TWO FRONTS, INCLUDING A CENTER LEFT COALITION WITH ITS OWN CANDIDATE, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME NEGOTIATING WITH THE GOB FOR AN ACCEPTABLE (TO THE MNR) OFFICIAL, MILITARY CANDIDATE. REALISTICALLY SPEAKING, THE ARENA OF BATTLE FOR THE POLITICAL PARTIES IS NOT THE PRESIDENCY, IT IS THE PARLIAMENT AND THE FUTURE GOB, AND THE SHARES IN EACH THE PARTIES CAN WIN.
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